

NOTE: THESE INSTRUCTIONS REPLACE ALL PREVIOUS INSTRUCTIONS.

These instructions *update* the protocol for preparing field sample records and then uploading field sampling data, COC information, and photos into NOAA's NRDA sampling data management system and match the sampling forms released on 5.14.2010. Following the guidelines below will ensure data and sample integrity. All sampling data, photos, and COC information should be uploaded by the end of the day in which they were sampled; they will be used daily to produce maps and guide future activities. If samples cannot be sent because of late return from the field, PLEASE still submit sampling data and photos; submit COC the following day.

DETERMINING YOUR LOCATION CODE:**Land-Based Sampling:**

The NRDA sampling grid is for use in filling out the NRDA sampling forms. The shorelines of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida are covered at a 1:100,000 scale. The grid cells are indexed with a six-character code for use on the sampling forms. This code has a two character prefix, which designates the state, two letters representing the row, and two numbers representing the column; for example, a cell code of **FLAH50** indicates that the cell is in Florida, row AH, and column 50. The rows range from AA to DE and the columns range from 01 to 83, and the location prefixes are as follows:

AL = Alabama

FL = Florida

LA = Louisiana

MS = Mississippi

TX = Texas

GU = Gulf

There are 18 sampling grid maps, each showing a subset of the grid cells. Index maps indicating which of the sampling grid maps correspond to the area in which you will be working are provided on the ftp site.

To find the correct sampling grid map for your survey:

1. Choose the index map corresponding to the state in which you will be sampling, these maps can be found on the Trustees only ftp site in the following locations:

Alabama:

//Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/IndexMaps/SamplingGrid_AlabamaIndexMap.jpg

Florida:

//Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/IndexMaps/ SamplingGrid_FloridaIndexMap.jpg

Louisiana

//Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/IndexMaps/ SamplingGrid_LouisianaIndexMap.jpg

Mississippi

//Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/IndexMaps/ SamplingGrid_MississippiIndexMap.jpg

Texas

//Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/IndexMaps/ SamplingGrid_TexasIndexMap.jpg

2. Use the state index map to find the sampling grid map corresponding to the specific area in which you will be working. The sampling grid maps are located on the Trustees only ftp site in //Maps/Sampling Maps/NRDA_SamplingMaps/.

3. Use the sampling grid map to find the sampling grid cell in which you will be working. The sampling grid cell codes are noted in the center of each cell. This is the six-digit code to note on the first column in the sampling form.

Water-Based Sampling:

Given the extent of the Gulf activities, for water-based sampling please use the following convention:

- GU
- Degree Latitude
- Degree Longitude

For example, if you are sampling location is 27.30 North and -88.30 West, your code would be GU2788.

COMPILING FIELD SAMPLE DATA

Sampling data should be compiled into a ZIP file that contains the following information:

1. Field sampling forms. There are three ways in which you can submit field logs:

- [NOAA NRDA Field Sampling Workbook¹](#): This custom-built Excel tool allows users to log sampling data entries in Excel and create customized COC information that is directly imported into the final NOAA database. *Note that you will have to enable macros for the forms to work properly.*

All NOAA staff are required to use this spreadsheet to enter sampling information.

Although non-NOAA staff are not required to use the spreadsheet, we strongly encourage use of the tool in order to:

- ensure that the collected data meets our quality and documentation requirements
- facilitate and expedite sample processing, and
- get the results back to you sooner.

To facilitate recording the data while in the field, we are providing printable field sampling and chain of custody forms. These forms replicate the organization of the entry forms and will assist in data entry to the excel tool.

- [NOAA NRDA Field Sampling - FLAT Version²](#): Also available is an Excel flat-file that organizes all of the required fields; although this version does not provide the enhanced functionality of the workbook described above. For each sample, please make sure you enter data for each relevant field in the sheet. If not, you will get a call from a member of the logistics/data management team looking for this information.
- **Hard-Copy:** Although strongly discouraged, if you are unable to complete either of the Excel tools, you must submit scanned copies of your printed forms. These field samples need to be recorded on the print version of the field sampling and chain of custody forms, which are included in the package.

If you have questions or need assistance with either tool please call the field sampling form/COC **helpline number at (985) 746-1394**. If you have any general questions regarding the forms, please send them to the gmail address (dwhnrda@gmail.com).

Regardless of which sampling spreadsheet you choose, make a copy, and rename it using the following naming convention:

¹ File: MC252_NRDA_Data_Entry_Tool.xls

² File: MC252_NRDA_Data_Entry_FlatFile.xls

<<YYYY>>_<<MM>>_<<DD>>_<<LAST NAME>>_<<FIRST_NAME>>.xls

For example:

2010_05_05_SMITH_JOHN.xls

2. Photos. All photos must be cataloged and tagged with GPS points. Due to the time and effort it takes to complete these tasks, we ask that you be judicious in the number of pictures you take in the field. Remember, for legal reasons, do not delete or rename photos.

Team locations:

- *Houma* - See a member of the logistics staff as you drop your chain of custody forms/mailing labels off in the NRDA room. Bring your camera and GPS unit and we will download your photos and GPS waypoints/tracks and process them with GPS Photolink and Photologger.
- *Field locations* - If you are using GARMIN MapSource, save the points twice from MapSource: once as a Garmin Database file (.gdb) and once as a GPS exchange file (.gpx). If you have other non-Garmin GPS/latitude longitude information, please provide GPS locations in a format (e.g., excel) that links the photo name with its coordinates. If the field locations are staffed with members of the data management team, they can assist you with this process.

3. Chain of Custody Forms and Mailing Labels. Please scan your *signed* COC forms and mailing labels. Note that the NOAA Spreadsheet will create a custom COC form based on your inputs.

NAMING THE ZIP FILE

Naming the ZIP correctly will greatly speed up the processing of the sampling information. When bundling and uploading the ZIP file, please use the following naming convention:

<<YYYY>>_<<MM>>_<<DD>>_<<LAST NAME>>_<<FIRST_NAME>>

For example:

2010_05_05_SMITH_JOHN.zip

UPLOADING SAMPLING INFORMATION & NOTIFYING DATA MANAGEMENT

To upload the ZIP file, go to the FTP site at:

www.researchplanning.com/downloads

Navigate to the respective day's folder:

TrusteesONLY/Sample_Data/<<YYYY>>_<<MM>><<DD>>.

Browse for the ZIP file and click upload.

Note that the FTP site currently has a limit of 1 GB *per file*. If you have ZIP files that are larger than 1 GB, please split the file and label appropriately. Please do not scan documents at a resolution higher than 300 DPI. This will help keep file size down.

*******IMPORTANT*******

Once you have uploaded the ZIP file to the FTP site, you must alert the data management staff. Please send an email to the gmail account (dwhnrda@gmail.com) as notification. Specifically, please use the following subject heading:

SAMPLE TO FTP <<YYYY>>_<<MM>>_<<DD>>_<<LAST NAME>>_<<FIRST_NAME>>

For example:

SAMPLE TO FTP 2010_05_05_SMITH_JOHN

Once again, thank you very much for following these procedures. Assistance from all sampling teams will improve efficiency and reduce our need to call you back for missing information.